

Sackville News



6th September 2016

A summer of success!

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the new school year! I hope you have all had a good summer break and we look forward to all that the academic year 2016-17 brings. I would particularly like to **welcome our new year 7 students and parents to the Sackville community**. We are looking forward to working with you and hope that you will be very happy with us. We are now **oversubscribed in both years 7 and 8** which is a great reflection of the popularity of the school and the quality of education that it offers the local community.



The new year 7 students during their first assembly

The school has actually been a hive of activity over the summer with dance schools and summer camps taking place here as well as an extensive amount of **maintenance and decorative** work. We see the six week break as an important opportunity to focus on premises improvements and I am enormously grateful to our **business manager, Nickie Clapson**, the **site team**, the **technical team** and our **ex-student painters** for all of their hard work. Some of the improvements will not be immediately obvious to the students but are significant. For example, our pipework has been completely replaced in the main blocks of the school. This was long overdue and means that we now have good water pressure throughout. Those in our science laboratories will certainly notice the difference straight away! I am grateful to West Sussex who supported our bid to have this work done.



This summer also saw several of our students travel to **India on a World Challenge programme** with Mr Wilcox, Ms Hilaly and Mr Morris. Such a trip is an incredibly rewarding experience, so well done to the students and many thanks to the staff for giving up their summer break to support the trip.

Over the past two weeks, we have been **recruiting new students to our strong and vibrant sixth form** and we are delighted to welcome many who are joining us from other schools.

As is the norm for this time of year, **examination results** have been coming in since mid-August and what a fantastic story they tell! Waiting for results is a very anxious time for all and I am so pleased to see these strong outcomes; they should be a source of pride for all.





The national headlines this year informed us that GCSE results have dipped at many levels and, in light of this, our results appear all the more special.

Parents may well have picked up that **value added progress** is the **key measure upon which school performance is now judged by the Department for Education and Ofsted**. Previously, value added was measured on performance in the best 8 subjects against end of primary national curriculum tests, and a score was given either side of an expected 1000. Parents may recall our joy at achieving 1013 in 2014 – positive for the first time – and then climbing to 1027 last year (top 12% of schools nationally). This year, on this scale, we would achieve a **stunning 1032** on this measure!

Value added is now measured on a new scale called 'Progress 8' which still looks at the progress of all students in 8 subjects, but in a different way. Now, the 8 subjects must include English and maths (which are counted at double value), then prioritise from 3 of sciences, history, geography, languages and computing and finally add in the best three remaining subjects. Schools are then given a score based on all their students' performances. It is a tight range of scores, with a national baseline expectation of -0.5 and where 0 is sound progress as it represents, on average, all student targets being achieved. To give a further example, if a school achieved an impressive +0.5 it means that, on average, the students achieved all their targets **plus** achieving one grade higher than targeted in half of their subjects.



Last year, as a pilot school for progress 8, we achieved +0.41, which was very strong. This year, based on that same national data, **Sackville has achieved +0.54** which **represents not only all student targets being met, but more than half of them being exceeded by one grade!** This really is something to celebrate and we are very hopeful that this places us **in the top 10% of schools nationally**. It certainly places us very high in West Sussex; it is difficult to find schools that have performed better. What is also pleasing is that we **predicted** almost exactly this score after the mock examinations which shows that our staff know their students well and are skilled in ensuring that the right support is in place in the final stretch to the final examinations. This outcome tells us that students and staff worked extremely hard and performed **way above national expectations**.

In both English and in maths, 75% of students achieved at least a grade C and I am delighted to report that **over 99% of students achieved at least 5 A*-G GCSE passes**. This reflects our ethos: we strive to ensure that every student at Sackville is well qualified regardless of ability, background or challenges faced. That is what good comprehensive education is all about: **'together we achieve'**.

Well done to the following students whose GCSE results reflected the **strongest progress** in the year group: **Christopher Oglethorpe, Danny Vater, Ciaran O'Callaghan, Cameron Toogood, Isobel Booker and Adam Kelly**.

Well done also to our **highest attainers** in the year group: **Rosy Napper (11A*, 2A), Oliver Blackman (6A*, 4A), Christopher Stuart (5A*, 5A), Alistair Smith (4A*, 8A), Andrew Huggett (4A*, 6A) and Erin Dearlove (3A*, 7A)**.

No summary of the GCSE results this year should go without mentioning the exceptional **fast track GCSE language results** for our year 9 students, where **more than one-third of these students achieved the top A* grade**, and **80% of students achieved a grade B or higher!**

A LEVEL

We are very pleased with this year's A level results which saw the school achieve a **tremendous value added score** which measures progress from GCSE. The school has enjoyed positive value added scores at A level for 8 years running now, which shows that the strength of the sixth form is well embedded.

80% of all grades are at C or above (on a scale where pass grades range from grade E upwards). This is an increase of 5% on 2015 and a further 5% on the year before that. This has been a target area for us, so is wonderful news!

In maths, **24 students achieved an A or A* at A level** which emphasises once again our position as a beacon of excellence amongst both state and private schools in the locality and well beyond.



The whole year group are worthy of congratulations here. I would like to mention the following particularly high attainers, who all achieved between A*A*A and AAA:-

Matt Bidgway (going to the University of Bristol, studying chemistry)

Kirsty Legg (Manchester, biochemistry)

Alba Halliday (Exeter, mathematics)

Noriyuki Ishii (University College London, architecture)

Georgina Booth (Lancaster, medicine)

Carly Wooding (Sheffield, biology after a gap year)

Zach Beckett (Bristol, civil engineering)

Sarah Townsend (Sheffield, biomedical science)

Aaron King (Bristol, chemistry)

Emma Baker (Exeter, natural sciences)

Sam Power (Warwick, accounting and finance after a gap year)

As soon as the results came in, we began scrutinising outcomes by individual, by student cohort and by subject to ensure that we can move forward with as much knowledge as possible in planning the new school year.

To conclude, I have massive respect and admiration for our students who worked so hard and were supported so well by you, their parents: congratulations everyone! Together with the input of the dedicated and skilled staff here, they have achieved outstanding sets of results. **It is the best progress we have ever achieved in the school and another exceptional year for Sackville.**

STAFFING 2016-17

I am delighted to report that we are fully staffed with talented practitioners for this year and would like to offer a warm welcome to the following staff who are joining us today:-

Mr Maunder and **Mrs Wernham** are joining the **English department**. Mr Maunder previously taught at Warden Park School and Mrs Wernham at Warlingham County School. Both bring with them a wealth of valuable experience.

Mrs Rowe, who taught with us last term in Media, now joins us on a full time basis. Another member of staff who has returned after teaching with us last term is **Ms Adams**, who will be teaching English on a part time basis. **Mrs Crawford** is joining us in the technology department also on a part time basis.

Ms McLeod is joining us as Curriculum Team Leader for history. She was once a Sackville student herself and previously taught at The Causeway School in Eastbourne.

Mrs Hunt joins us as our new **SendCo**. Mrs Hunt was previously an Assistant Headteacher at a special school in West Sussex and brings with her a great deal of tried and tested expertise.

We are pleased to welcome three new study supervisors to the school, **Mrs Tweed**, **Mrs Smith** and **Mr Bull** and also two foreign language assistants, **Ms Garcés** (Spanish) and **Ms Belliere** (German). Three Learning Support Assistants will also be joining us: **Mrs Coates**, **Mrs Mills** and **Mrs Mustard**. **Mrs Luxton** is joining us in the role of attendance secretary.

Internally, parents will probably already be aware of our two new year leaders – **Mr Morris** (year 7) and **Ms Hilaly** (year 9). **Mrs Barden**, previously our attendance secretary, is becoming our new sixth form intervention leader to support student learning in this successful and growing part of the school and **George Taylor**, one of our sixth form musicians studying with us last year, has been appointed to the post of Performing Arts Technician. **Tom Thorburn**, who also studied in our sixth form last year, is assuming the role of IT technician in the school.

We are sorry to say goodbye to **Ms Butler**, our Futures Leader, who is leaving us to take up a position with Virgin Atlantic Airways. As a qualified teacher, I have no doubt that she will be back at Sackville before too long! Ms Butler has done fantastic work in moving forward our careers provision and we are currently in the process of appointing her replacement.

I would now just like to wish everyone a productive and fulfilling year ahead.

Best wishes,

Julian Grant
Headteacher

The new academic year



Mr Street writes:-

Welcome back, I hope everyone had a relaxing holiday and you've been enjoying the uncharacteristically good summer holiday weather, which I am reliably informed is going to continue into the Autumn term.

It was great to see all students returning in high spirits after a summer of record breaking exam results and so it should come as no surprise that last year's Year 11 were the highest attending year group in the school.

It is important that at the beginning of the school year I outline our high expectations. In the majority of cases we would expect students' attendance to exceed 96% as this is conducive to good learning. In line with government policy, Sackville School does not authorise holiday in term time and we would appreciate it if all parents could arrange holidays during the thirteen weeks of school holidays which are allocated to students each academic year.

As always, we are happy to work with all students and their families regarding attendance issues or concerns.

I would also like to comment on how fantastic the new Year 7 look in their Sackville uniform. Their excitement and enthusiasm is contagious. It is also good to see the Year 11 buddies who act as super role models for our Year 7 wearing their new ties which quite rightly identify them as senior students.

I would like to remind students and parents of our high expectations regarding uniform which can be viewed on our website. However I would like to make it clear that the following are not permitted:

- Jeans or chino style trousers
- Skin tight trousers, leggings, jeggings, wide flares, culottes or shorts
- Coloured shoes or trainers

As I mentioned in the last edition of Sackville News, students who arrive in incorrect uniform will be asked to change into the correct uniform that the school will provide. I would like to thank you for your continued support in helping us maintain our high standards when it comes to uniform.

It is also worth reminding parents that we do have a **second hand uniform** shop at reception.

Finally can I wish you all a very happy and successful school year.